

Serial No. 10/598,989
Docket No. X-16606

Amendments to the Drawings

None

Remarks/Arguments

In this paper, claim 1 has been amended to make clearer the location of the opening. The amendment is supported at least in page 12 of the specification. Claim 4 has been amended to depend from claim 2, to remove “said” and to provide a proper pinion reference. As a result of the amendments, claims 1-17 remain pending. Applicants believe that no new matter has been presented. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application in view of the amendments and remarks presented herein are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claim 4 was rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, related to its stated association of drive member rack engaging teeth with the first pinion. The amendment to claim 4 referenced above is believed to overcome this rejection.

In the Office Action, claims 1-4 and 16 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 5782633 to Muhlbauer. Claim 17 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Muhlbauer ‘633. Claims 5-15 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but stated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, as well as correcting the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph.

In response, it is respectfully asserted that while Muhlbauer ‘633 may include many of the features of the claimed invention, it does not include every limitation of claim 1, particularly as amended above. In the Office Action, the Examiner simply asserts that figure 1 shows the claim limitation of “at least a portion of said drive member extends through an opening through at least one of said first and second pinions”. No clear identification of the opening itself was offered by the Examiner, and frankly that is not surprising as the opening as taught and claimed by the Applicants does not appear present in the ‘633 patent.

The opening of the present invention, as taught in the specification, allows free passage of a portion of the drive member through the central region of the pinion. Claim 1 has been amended above to make this clear by reciting “said opening extending completely through a diameter of said at least one of said first and second pinions”. Nothing in Muhlbauer ‘633 is believed to teach such an opening through a pinion diameter. Furthermore, as not unless Applicants own teachings were impermissibly used as a guide would one attempt to realize such a change in Muhlbauer ‘633, the claimed invention is not obvious in view of that patent.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1, as well as claims 2-17 that are dependent on claim 1, are in fact patentable and are in condition for allowance. Thus, it

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is requested that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

If any extension of time or fees are required with this paper, such are hereby petitioned therefor and the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any such fees to Deposit Account No. 05-0840.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned with any questions if such would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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